Section One: Introduction

What Is Included in this Document?

This document includes Ohio's standards for educators:

- the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession;
- the Ohio Standards for Principals;
- the Ohio Standards for Professional Development.

In addition to the standards, additional information and tools are provided to assist educators in understanding and using these standards.

Who Is the Audience for this Document?

This document is written for you – Ohio's educators. One purpose for articulating clear, world-class standards is to assist educators in guiding their own professional learning. Along with this document, other companion guides and technical manuals will be released to assist Local Professional Development Committees (LPDCs), districts and schools with creating and implementing their professional development plans and programs. This document is intended to assist individual teachers and principals in self-assessing their performance, collaboratively discussing self-assessment results with peers or supervisors, and using these inputs to develop Individual Professional Development Plans.

Why Standards-Based Education?

The success of any organization depends on a set of clear, shared goals and standards. Schools are no exception. Setting high expectations and clearly stating the criteria needed for success is essential in creating a world-class educational system. Clearly and commonly defined goals for students, teachers and principals serve multiple purposes:

1. Standards make clear the shared expectations for success;
2. Standards delineate what matters in learning and teaching;
3. Standards show best practices in instruction and leadership;
4. Standards facilitate communication through common language;
5. Standards meet state and federal guidelines.

Standards help create quality schools with highly effective principals and teachers who guide instruction that meets the needs of all students.

In a standards-based system, learning, instruction, curriculum and assessment align. Students understand what they are expected to know and do; teachers focus instruction to help students meet these expectations; and principals support teachers with the resources and tools needed to effectively teach.

A Brief History of Ohio's Standards-Based System

The creation of standards for teachers, principals and professional development is a recent development in Ohio's movement toward a world-class, standards-based educational system. Over the last decade, Ohio has made important education policy advances, with a focus on standards and accountability, which together have moved Ohio's kindergarten through 12th grade system forward in several important ways.

Ohio's standards movement began with the creation of student standards. In 1997, the State Board of Education and the Ohio Board of Regents created a Joint Council that established common expectations for what all students should know and be able to do upon completion of high school. These common expectations in six content areas (the Arts, English Language Arts, Foreign Languages, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies) served as the foundations for Ohio's Academic Content Standards, mandated by Ohio Senate Bill 1 (2001), which also called for new assessments to match the standards.

> "Will clear expectations and more credible evaluation systems really make a difference? Educators in Ohio think so. Seventy-two percent of the teachers the Commission surveyed agreed that the quality of their teaching would improve if the standards used to evaluate their performance were more clearly defined."
>
> *Achieving More: Quality Teaching, School Leadership, Student Success*

Along with the development of these clearly defined expectations for students, the state recognized the importance of clearly defined expectations for teachers and school leaders. The Governor's Commission on Teaching Success, convened in 2001, was asked to develop recommendations to support the capacity of Ohio's teachers at consistently high levels. Essential to the Commission's recommendations in its report entitled *Achieving More: Quality Teaching, School Leadership, Student Success* was the proposal that the state create standards for teachers, principals and for professional development. According to the Commission, "The absence of standards that provide principles of professional practice for all teachers and school leaders must be addressed if we are serious about ensuring quality teaching in every Ohio classroom."

Ohio is serious about its commitment to quality schools. The report of the Governor's Commission on Teaching Success was followed by the passage of Senate Bill SB 2 in 2004, which mandated the creation of the Educator Standards Board (ESB). The Board was charged with the creation of the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession, the Ohio Standards for Principals and the Ohio Standards for Professional Development. The standards will be followed by guidelines to assist schools in evaluating performance against the standards.

These reforms have already produced results. In almost every grade and subject area, Ohio students' average and absolute test scores have risen. Students who have been traditionally disadvantaged – Black, Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students – have made faster gains than the average Ohio student. Ohio's fourth- and eighth-grade students' scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in mathematics, reading and science are all above the U.S. average.

Ohio still has work to do, however, to create a truly world-class educational system, and the standards for teacher, principals and professional development will move Ohio closer to this goal.

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The Development Process of the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession, the Ohio Standards for Principals and the Ohio Standards for Professional Development

In 2004, Gov. Bob Taft signed Senate Bill 2, which put into law many of the recommendations made by the Governor's Commission on Teaching Success in the areas of standards, teacher preparation, recruitment and retention, and professional development. SB 2 mandated the creation of the Educator Standards Board (ESB) to bring standards-based reform to the educator level by defining standards for teachers and principals at all stages of their careers.

In order to develop the mandated standards, the ESB solicited stakeholder organizations for nominations for writing team members – practicing teachers, principals and administrators and higher education representatives – who would draft the content and language of the standards. The ESB and standards writing teams met throughout the 2004-2005 academic year to draft the standards. Feedback from all Ohioans was sought and used to revise the draft standards. National reviewers were identified to review and provide feedback on the drafts. The revised standards were adopted by the State Board of Education in fall 2005.

Key Areas of Alignment among the Standards

The Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession, the Ohio Standards for Principals and the Ohio Standards for Professional Development were developed to support each other and to create an aligned system of expectations for Ohio's educators. The standards together represent what is known about the practices of highly effective teachers, principals and systems of professional development. As a result, common themes cross all three sets of standards. These shared ideas include an emphasis on the importance of:

- a focus on student achievement;
- data-based decision making (principals use data to lead the development of a vision and goals of the school; teachers use data to set their instructional plans and professional development goals);
- communication and collaboration;
- shared leadership;
- principals as instructional leaders;
- continuous professional development.

How Are the Standards Organized?

All three sets of standards are organized as follows:

- **Standard**: The Standard is the broad category of knowledge, skills or performance;
- **Narrative**: The Narrative more fully describes the content and rationale for each Standard;
- **Elements**: The Elements are the statements of what educators should know, think and do to be effective. In the case of the Ohio Standards for Professional Development, the Elements are the statements of the characteristics of effective professional development.
- **Indicators**: The Indicators show the knowledge and skills of each Element in practice. The Indicators are observable and measurable statements that serve as tools in discussions of educators' skills and knowledge or professional development's effectiveness.

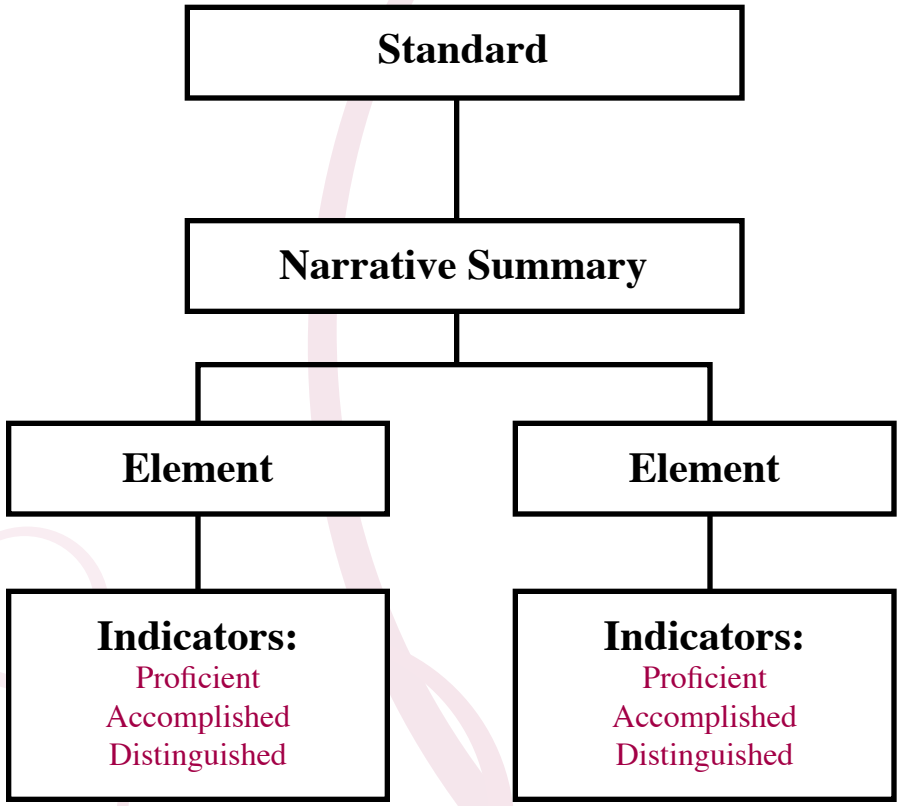
This organization by Standard, Narrative, Element and Indicator is shown in the graphic below:

Standards:
Overarching goals and themes that provide a framework

Narrative Summaries:
Statements that describe key understandings, assumptions and beliefs related to the standard

Elements:
Specific statements of knowledge, skills or performance

Indicators:
Observable and measurable statements that provide evidence of effectiveness in practice



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The Indicator Levels

In the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession and the Ohio Standards for Principals, the indicators are written to show performance at three levels: Proficient, Accomplished and Distinguished. These levels are based on research on the growth of educators throughout the span of their careers. The inclusion of these leveled indicators is intended to guide discussion about the practices of teachers and principals in order to recognize teachers' and principals' successes and meet their professional needs.

The indicators are cumulative. The Proficient level indicators describe the building blocks of knowledge and skills that allow educators and school leaders to advance in their expertise. Teachers and principals who reach the Accomplished level demonstrate mastery of the skills and knowledge at the Proficient level. Teachers and principals at the Distinguished level demonstrate mastery of the skills and knowledge at the Proficient and Accomplished levels. Therefore, to get a complete picture of the characteristics expected of a teacher or principal at the Distinguished level, readers will need to look at the indicators provided in the Proficient and Accomplished levels as well.

Mastery of each level does not necessarily correlate with time on the job; these indicators represent developmental skills and knowledge. Some teachers or principals might be at one level for one element and another level for another element. Teachers who move to a new grade or a new discipline might move to another level of proficiency. All teachers and principals are expected to perform at the Proficient and the Accomplished levels during the course of their careers. The three levels can be defined as:

Proficient Level

All Ohio teachers and principals are expected to meet the Proficient level.

At the Proficient level, teachers demonstrate knowledge of the skills and abilities needed for effective content-area instruction. They are in the process of refining their skills and understandings to fully integrate their knowledge and skills. They monitor the situations in their classrooms and schools and respond appropriately.

Accomplished Level

All Ohio teachers and principals are expected to reach the Accomplished level.

At the Accomplished level, teachers effectively integrate the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for effective content-area instruction. They are fully skilled professionals who demonstrate purposefulness, flexibility and consistency. They anticipate and monitor situations in their classrooms and schools, and make appropriate plans and responses.

Distinguished Level

The Distinguished level represents the highest level of achievement for Ohio teachers and principals.

At the Distinguished level, teachers and principals use their strong foundation of knowledge, skills and abilities to innovate and enhance their classrooms, buildings and districts. They are leaders who empower and influence others. They anticipate and monitor situations in their classrooms and schools and effectively reshape their environments accordingly. They respond to the needs of their colleagues and students immediately and effectively.

What Do These Standards Mean for Me?

	Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession	Ohio Standards for Principals	Ohio Standards for Professional Development
Teachers	These standards will guide teachers in self-assessing their knowledge and practices and considering their professional growth along a continuum of practice. This continuum of practice is also defined more fully in the career ladder developed by the Educator Standards Board.	The Ohio Standards for Principals articulate an expectation of shared leadership; teachers can reference these standards to consider opportunities for collaboration and team leadership. These standards also may serve as a resource for aspiring principals.	These standards will guide teachers in determining their professional development needs and developing their Individual Professional Development Plans.
Principals	Principals should use the Ohio teacher standards as they seek ways to develop, support and retain high-quality teachers. The standards create a common language for coaching and mentoring purposes.	These standards will guide Ohio principals in self-assessing their knowledge and practices and considering their professional growth along a continuum of practice.	These standards will guide principals in determining their professional development needs and developing their Individual Professional Development Plans.
Administrators	School and district administrators should use the Ohio teacher standards as they seek ways to develop, support and retain high-quality teachers. The standards create a common language for coaching and mentoring purposes.	School and district administrators will consider the Ohio Standards for Principals as they seek ways to develop, support and retain high-quality principals. The standards create a common language for coaching and mentoring purposes.	Schools and districts should use the professional development standards to design the school or district professional development program.
Higher Education	ODE and OBR will collaborate with colleges and universities to align teacher preparation programs with the educator standards.	Higher education institutions should consider the Ohio Standards for Principals as they develop programs for Ohio's future principals.	The professional development standards should be considered as higher education institutions plan course offerings that will be taken as continuing education courses for educators and administrators.
LPDCs	The standards will assist LPDCs in helping educators focus their plans for professional growth and create their Individual Professional Development Plans.	The standards will assist LPDCs in helping principals focus their plans for professional growth and create their Individual Professional Development Plans.	Standards-based criteria will be developed that LPDCs can follow in helping educators create their own plans and in evaluating their Individual Professional Development Plans once they are created.

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Uses of the Standards

The Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession were created to guide teachers as they reflect upon and improve their effectiveness throughout their careers. It is anticipated that these standards will:

- assist higher education programs in developing the content and requirements of preservice preparation and development;
- focus the goals and objectives of districts and schools as they support educators;
- be used to plan and guide professional development;
- serve as a tool in developing coaching and mentoring programs.

The Ohio Standards for Principals define the expectations for and traits of effective principals at all stages of their careers. These standards promote effective leadership practices and will support principals as they reflect upon and improve their effectiveness throughout their careers. These standards will:

- assist higher education programs in developing the content and requirements of leadership preparation programs;
- focus the goals and objectives of districts as they support their schools' educational leaders;
- be used to plan and guide professional development for principals;
- serve as a tool in developing coaching and mentoring programs for principals.

The Ohio Standards for Professional Development delineate the effective characteristics of quality professional development. They are written for multiple audiences including planners, providers, participants and evaluators of professional development. The standards present a view of effective professional development as an ongoing, systematic process that is linked to the daily practices of educators and based on data that shows the professional development needs of individuals and organizations.

Support for Using and Implementing the Standards

The development of the standards and the release of this document are just part of the process of implementation. Along with this document, companion guides and technical manuals for professional development will assist schools, districts and outside professional development providers in creating professional development plans and programs that reflect what is known about effective teaching, school leadership and professional learning.

The Ohio Professional Development Team is made up of practicing educators who represent the Ohio Staff Development Council, Ohio's LPDCs, the Ohio Department of Education and the Educator Standards Board. In work that is being facilitated by the National Staff Development Council (NSDC), this group is establishing a planning framework that includes guidelines and tools for districts creating professional development programs using a standards-based planning cycle. The LPDC Regional Support Site Team is developing new criteria for effective Individual Professional Development Plans, as mandated by SB 2. The criteria will be updated as LPDCs align their expectations with the new standards and phase in these new guidelines over time, allowing for the five-year cycle of renewal. These efforts together will support Ohio as it moves toward a standards-based educational system that will support Ohio's educators in meeting the learning and achievement goals of all of Ohio's students.

Future Steps in Ohio's Standards-Based System

Each of the sets of standards is intended to drive conversations about the practices of teaching, educational leadership and professional development. SB 2 mandated the development of evaluation guidelines aligned with the Standards; these will be developed in the near future.

The bill also directed the ESB and ODE to develop jointly a proposal for a career ladder program, defined as "a performance-based multilevel system of teaching positions or compensation levels within a school district or district building." In doing so, the ESB and ODE sought to create a comprehensive teacher leadership conceptual framework that enhances roles and responsibilities; encourages increased knowledge, skills and performance; spreads a culture of career opportunities; and increases teacher productivity and fulfillment. This proposal for a career lattice program is firmly anchored in the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession and the Ohio Standards for Principals, both of which emphasize the importance of teacher leadership and shared leadership structures, and the Ohio Standards for Professional Development, which describes a process in which teachers can progress throughout their careers.

The standards and the information at the end of this document can be used to facilitate important conversations about effective practices for Ohio's teachers and principals and to engage all Ohio educators in a process of professional development within a learning community that shares the same definition of effectiveness and the same goal of increased learning among all of Ohio's students.